

Amendment Dated October 25, 2007
Serial No. 10/615,513

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the rejections set forth in the Office Action dated April 25, 2007 is respectfully requested. By this amendment claims 1 and 14 have been amended. Currently, claims 1-7, 9-11, and 13-25 are pending in this application. A RCE was previously filed on October 25, 2007. All fees for the RCE and extension of time were paid in connection with that previous filing.

This application relates to industrial networks, and more particularly to a way in which access to particular PLCs and attendant factory machines may be circumscribed so that only particular authorized individuals may have access to particular PLCs over the industrial network.

As discussed in the background of the specification, for example at page 1, PLCs are able to be connected to a company's Ethernet network or other data network. However, where there is more than one person that is allowed to program PLCs on the network, a person may accidentally make a change to the wrong PLC or a person may intentionally change the programs of PLCs on the network to affect operation of the machines associated with the PLCs.

Accordingly, applicants proposed to implement a security point (Secure Policy Implementation Point – SPIP) between the network and the PLC to control who is allowed to access particular PLCs via the network. Thus, simply obtaining access to a centralized network controller is insufficient to program all PLCs connected to the network – the SPIP will also require that the user of the network control system be authenticated and authorized at a particular SPIP before allowing the user to make changes to the PLCs associated with the SPIP.

In the Advisory Action the Examiner noted that applicants had made this argument in the response, but indicated that the claims that were previously presented were not specific enough to support this argument. Applicants have amended independent claims 1 and 14 to clarify that the SPIP performs this second layer of control by preventing a person using a management program from accessing the one or more programmable logic controllers over the local area network unless authenticated to the SPIP and authorized to take action on the SPIP. In view of this amendment, applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejections. For the reasons set forth in the Amendment dated August 27, 2007, applicants respectfully submit that the claims, as amended, are allowable over the cited art.

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Conclusion

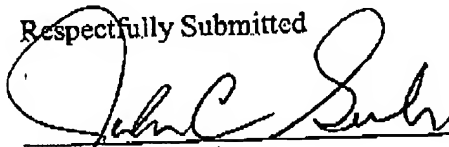
Applicants believe that the claims submitted in this case are patentable over the cited references, even when the claims are given their broadest reasonable interpretation. However, applicants are interested in working with the Examiner to define claims of appropriate scope that both the Examiner and applicants believe are patentable over the art of record. In connection with this, applicants would welcome an opportunity to discuss this case with the Examiner and cordially invite the Examiner to call applicant's representative if the Examiner feels that a telephone interview would further prosecution of this application. Likewise, if the Examiner has any other concerns about any of the statements made herein, the Examiner is invited to telephone applicants representative to discuss these matters.

If any fees are due in connection with this filing, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment of the fees associated with this communication or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 502246 (Ref: NN-15929).

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Respectfully Submitted



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